



Cheat Sheet Recruiting volunteers

¿ Do you want increase the number of volunteers? Do you want to find inspiration to recruit new volunteers? Do you want to find a way of approaching the issue of reaching out to new people and asking them to volunteer for your National Society? This cheat sheet helps you to step by step find a way to prepare for recruitment of volunteers.

Red Cross Red Crescent activities are based on volunteer involvement. The volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and give our business a special quality. Our volunteer saves and changes lives. Without them we simply would not be able to conduct our business to help hundreds of thousands of people every year, in your country and abroad. With a view to the future, it is necessary to continuously recruit volunteers.

People's commitment to and engagements in volunteering vary from country to country. Unfortunately, common to all countries is that too many people are not engaged as volunteers.

Many people want to get involved in Red Cross Red Crescent activities, for a shorter or longer period. If many people make a small contribution, the work becomes easier and more fun. In addition, new ideas can be realized when new volunteers join. The ability to help people in vulnerable situations is increasing through the creation of opportunities for new volunteers to get involved. For those of you who are already active in the Red Cross

Red Crescent, you have to be responsive and open to people's willingness to help. Combine your experience and imagination to be able to take advantage of potential volunteers' commitment.

I. Your need of volunteers

What are your needs for volunteers? What do you want them to take part in? Many of your current members and supporters may be interested in joining as volunteers. Perhaps there are many in the neighborhood and the workplace which are waiting for the question about becoming a volunteer in the Red Cross Red Crescent. People are waiting to volunteer – you just need to approach and ask them. Remember to be clear of your needs and that the Red Cross Red Crescent is open to all who share our values.

We want to be an organization where all people without distinction are welcome to join and help based on their commitment. It is important to strive for a great diversity.

Remember that:

- Please specify why you need volunteers and to what.
- People are different and suit different assignments.
- Specify how much time is required for the task.
- Some tasks require different experiences and expertise.
- Age, gender, background, etc. may be relevant to a particular assignment.
- Listen to ideas from your own volunteers and members.

II. Prepare the recruitment

If many people are involved in the recruitment of volunteers, the interface is wider. Use different methods of recruitment depending on what you want to achieve. Recruit as widely as you can, especially among those groups that are currently poorly represented in your National Society. Your work is made easier if your volunteers represent a cross section of society.

III. Recruiting

Prior to recruitment, it is good to go through what you

want help with and what you can offer the new volunteers. Describe the needs as concrete as possible without promising too much. Explain why the Red Cross Red Crescent needs volunteers. Describe people's vulnerability and the necessity of the humanitarian activities.

How you approach the people you want to recruit is of great importance for your success:

- Take a quick contact with interested people.
- Meet with each and every one individually.
- Be two in your team when you are interviewing.
- Be specific and clear with the volunteer assignment.
- Convince - do not appeal.
- Inspire with commitment.
- Add flavor with your own knowledge and experience.
- Link to the person's own interests and skills.
- Listen to and respond to questions.
- Respect a no.

The people you recruit will need the answer on the following questions:

- What is my specific assignment?
- Why does the Red Cross Red Crescent do this?
- When can I start?
- How much time do I have to invest?
- Who will be in my team?
- Who will be my volunteer leader?

These are some approaches you can use:

- Designate a team to be responsible for the recruitment.
- Post your volunteer opportunities at your website and other Internet-based forum.
- Take the opportunity to recruit when you have activities that display the Red Cross Red Crescent and what you do.
- Your regular branded locations where you have activities are good places to reach people who may be interested to become volunteers.
- Coordinate the recruitment efforts with others in your National Society and make it jointly and simultaneously.
- Contact local media and offer them story ideas and the opportunity to describe what your volunteers do. Advertise in local media and take advantage of when the Red Cross Crescent can be seen in the media.
- Reach out and target select groups and individuals.
- Take every opportunity to provide information about your services. Tell about what your services and activities contribute to the local community.



Recuadro y Portada: Voluntarios de la Cruz Roja Chilena. Foto: Daniel Rojas / CICR

- How can I influence my volunteer assignment?
- What should I know in advance?
- What support and what training will I receive?
- Who can give me more details?
- Who will help me to solve any problem?
- What does the Red Cross in general - locally, nationally and globally?

If the person is not suitable for the task, have the courage to say that. Try to find other volunteer assignments that better fit the person.

IV. Introduce New Volunteers

When you are new, a first initial introduction is of great value. Volunteers give of their time, experience and commitment and want to get something back.

Remember that:

- Neither over- or underestimate the content and scope of the assignment.
- Listen to questions and doubts. The assignment may have to be adapted or even changed.
- There may be other volunteer assignments that fit better.
- Create a nice and comfortable environment for the introduction.
- Take it slow and listen.
- Make sure that the volunteers can get started as soon as possible.
- Appoint a patron or mentor for the first time.
- Newly recruited volunteer leaders need thorough and

thoughtful introduction.

- Ensure that the volunteers are well informed about the volunteer policy, and that they know their rights and obligations.

V. Follow Up

Basics for a successful recruitment are that anyone who is recruited is smoothly and quickly guided into the right task, gets good coaching and the necessary training. Continuous contact, interest and appreciation for the efforts of volunteers keep the momentum alive. A festivity once and a while provide good nutrition!

Make sure there is someone who is accountable for the follow-up discussions with the volunteer. Plan for a follow up after a few weeks once the volunteer has begun so that you together can assess how it goes:

- How has the introduction worked?
- What about the volunteer assignment?
- How is the contact with the volunteer leader?
- How has the information, support and training functioned?
- Need some changes be made?
- How is the contact with other volunteers?
- Is anything missing in the introduction?

Those who are engaged in recruiting volunteers soon recognize that something is needed for themselves too. It can range from training and group discussions to concrete and practical things. Tips, ideas and exchange of experience with others in the same situation mean a lot.

Drives for volunteering

- To have the opportunity to get involved in a concrete humanitarian activity.
- To feel needed and be useful for others.
- To be included in a meaningful context.
- Working together with others for a common cause.
- To be acknowledged for what you do, can and want.
- To be appreciated.
- To increase the individual knowledge and learn new things.
- To be treated with respect and trust.
- Being able to influence the voluntary assignments.
- It is meritorious to be a volunteer.

As a volunteer in the Red Cross Red Crescent, you will get a valuable experience, education and social community. You give of your time, experience and your commitment to someone who needs your support right now.

Recruitment step by step

Here are some guiding questions to help exploring the previous sections.

1. Your need of volunteers
 - What are the needs in the community?
 - How does our capacity look like?
 - What do we need volunteers for?
 - What could we do with more volunteers?
2. Prepare the recruitment
 - What key groups need to be strengthened among our volunteers?
 - Where do we find the volunteers we are looking for?
3. Recruit
 - What recruitment methods do we use?
 - Who can help us to reach out to more people?
 - What will we tell them when we ask?
4. Introduce new recruits
 - What information and training is important to offer?
 - How can we develop and provide support for those we recruit?
 - How do we introduce our newly recruited volunteers?
5. Follow up
 - What do we do to follow up on the recruitment?
 - What skills do we need to give the recruitment team?
 - What lessons do we draw from our recruitment effort?